

Meeting Notes

August 4, 2000

9:30 – 12:30

Attendance

Council members: Gretchen White, Chair, *Department of Transportation*
Sue Carnahan, *alternate for Tom Kelly, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction*
Liz Dunbar, *Department of Social and Health Services*
Glen Hallman, *Consumer Representative*
Michael Harbour, *Intercity Transit, representing Washington State Transit Association*
Doreen Marchione, *Hopelink, representing CTA-NW and the Washington Association of Community Action Agencies*

Legislative Members: Senator Georgia Gardner
Senator Marilyn Rasmussen
Jennifer Barton, for Senator Jim Honeyford

Staff members:	Jim Erlandson, ACCT	Debra Mendoza, ACCT
	Mary Kellington, ACCT	Cathy Silins, WSDOT
	Gordon Kirkemo, WSDOT	Jeanne Ward, ACCT

Welcome and introductions

Gretchen White welcomed everyone to the meeting. The council and audience members introduced themselves. Gretchen White explained ACCT's traditional meeting structure. There are no scheduled breaks, meeting attendees are encouraged to stand and stretch or leave the room whenever necessary. Audience members are welcome to join the discussion at any point.

This is the first meeting for the new members of the ACCT council. The six provider and consumer representatives serve for two years. Their term will end June 30, 2002. The three state agency representatives are permanent members of the council. However,

the retirement of Charles Reed resulted in a new member from DSHS.

New council members

Reg Clarke, Edmonds School District Transportation Program Director, represents the Washington Association of Pupil Transportation. Reg completed Gladys Doriot's council term after her resignation and was appointed by the Governor to be the ongoing representative from WAPT.

Liz Dunbar, DSHS Deputy Secretary, will represent DSHS as one of the three permanent members of the council. She fills a vacancy left by Charles Reed's retirement. Liz has worked for DSHS for nearly 20 years, primarily in public assistance. This has given her experience with transportation issues faced by public assistance clients. Liz was also the Director of the DSHS Diversity Initiative.

Glen Hallman, consumer representative, has worked with senior programs for many years. He is the outgoing Chair of the State Council on Aging. Glen has also been on the board of directors for the Whatcom County Council on Aging, a delegate to the White House Conference on Aging, a member of Whatcom Transportation Authority's Citizen Advisory Panel, and involved with the NW Regional Council Area Agency on Aging, and the Whatcom County Community Health Partnership.

Marlaina Lieberg, consumer representative, was unable to attend this meeting. Marlaina is the Chair of Sound Transit's Citizen's Accessibility Advisory Committee. She has been President of the National Guide Dog Users, Inc., founding President of Guide Dog Users of Washington State, a member of the Board of Directors of the United Blind of Seattle, and a member of the Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority Elderly/ Handicapped Advisory Committee (Washington, DC). We look forward to welcoming her to the council.

Doreen Marchione represents CTA-NW and the Washington Association of Community Action Agencies. Doreen is the Executive Director of Hopelink (formerly MutiServices of King County). She has served on the Transit Committee of the King County Council, Puget Sound Regional Council, and Governor's Transportation Demand Management Task Force. Doreen is a past President of the Washington State Association of Community Action Agencies.

Reappointed council members

Mike Harbor, General Manager of Intercity Transit, represents the Washington State Transit Association (WSTA). This will be Mike's second term on the council.

Andrew Johnsen, Governor's Transportation Policy Advisor, continues as a member of ACCT. Andrew joined ACCT in 1999 replacing Jennifer Joly.

Ongoing state agency members

Tom Kelly represents the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Tom is the Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Support. This will be Tom's second term on the council.

Gretchen White, DOT Deputy Secretary for Policy, has chaired ACCT since it began. Gretchen will continue in this role.

Legislative members

Senator Tracey Eide, Democrat, member of the Senate Transportation Committee. Senator Eide represents the 30th district (Federal Way and parts of Tacoma, Auburn, Fife, Milton and Algonia).

Senator Georgia Gardner, Democrat, Vice-Chair of Senate Transportation Committee. Senator Gardner represents the 42nd district (Whatcom County).

Senator Jim Honeyford, Republican, Senate Ways & Means Committee. Senator Honeyford represents the 15th district (Klickitat County and parts of Yakima, Skamania and Benton counties).

Senator Marilyn Rasmussen, Democrat, Senate Ways & Means Committee. Senator Rasmussen represents the 2nd district (Pierce County, including McKenna, Roy, Ft. Lewis, DuPont, Spanaway, Fredrickson, South Prairie, Prairie Ridge, Orting, Graham, and north of the City of Eatonville).

Senator Larry Sheahan, Republican, Senate Transportation Committee. Senator Sheahan represents the 9th district (Adams and Whitman counties, and parts of Asotin and Spokane).

Representative Brad Benson, Republican, House Appropriations Committee. Representative Benson represents the 6th district (part of the City of Spokane, part of Spokane Valley, and the southwest portion of Spokane County including Moran Prairie, the northern portion of the West Plains and a portion of the City of Airway Heights).

Representative Jeanne Edwards, Democrat, House Transportation Committee. Representative Edwards represents the 1st district (Northeast King County and

South Snohomish County, including areas of Bothell, Woodinville, Kirkland, Kenmore, Mountlake Terrace, Brier, and Lynnwood).

Representative Phil Fortunato, Republican, House Transportation Committee. Representative Fortunato represents the 47th district (southeast King County from the Renton Highlands to Kent to Black Diamond).

Representative Alex Wood, Democrat, House Transportation Committee. Representative Wood represents the 3rd district (downtown Spokane area, extending to the North Side and South Hill).

In the next two years ACCT will work to resolve difficult coordination issues. The past term's council laid the foundation for this work. ACCT work groups appreciate the consideration that the ACCT council has given their recommendations and the acknowledgment the council has given of the work involved.

Meeting notes from ACCT June 2, 2000

The council approved the June meeting notes.

Agenda amendments — *presented by Cathy Silins*

Two additions were made to the original agenda:

- A discussion of the Guidelines from the Federal Council on Access and Mobility
- A discussion of the Blue Ribbon Commission's draft report

Introduction of new ACCT staff — *presented by Jeanne Ward*

Jeanne Ward introduced Debra Mendoza and Jim Erlandson. Debra is the new ACCT Secretary. Debra joined ACCT on August 2. She will be working full time.

Jim Erlandson, a long-time member of the PACT Forum, joined ACCT on August 1. Jim came from DSHS Aging and Adult Services. He will provide assistance to communities developing coordinated transportation systems.

ACCT grant updates

Spokane County — *presented by Dan Schwanz, Special Mobility Services*

The Spokane Chamber of Commerce is the lead agency for Spokane County.

Coordination efforts went smoothly at first. They have slowed due to key individuals retiring.

Accomplishments:

The Chamber of Commerce has held forums and developed a list of organizations to involve. They are hiring a part-time staff member to renew their momentum.

Problems

Reorganization at the lead agency and the retirement of key individuals has slowed this effort.

I695 caused both service and staff reductions at the Spokane Transit Authority (STA). They are less involved now than they were. STA is still interested and would like to be involved, but do not have the resources to commit as much to this effort as they would like.

Snohomish County — *presented by Denise Brand, Snohomish County Human Services*

Accomplishments

Initial forum attended by about 30 people from a wide range of interests. Community interest in coordinating transportation is high

Problems

Lack of staff and time constraints make beginning this effort difficult.

I695 has raised interest in coordination, but reduced the resources available to plan for it. Transportation providers are most concerned with keeping their services on the road. They are interested, but unable to commit resources to working on coordination issues.

Discussion

Mike Harbour noted that in Thurston County, I-695 increased the urgency and need for coordinated transportation. This is particularly true in rural areas of the county. Intercity Transit (IT) has reduced service due to funding cuts. This created

new gaps in outlying areas. IT is working closely with social services to provide all the transportation possible to these areas.

Transit systems receive no designated funding to provide special needs transportation (either state or federal). They are required by the ADA to provide transportation for people with disabilities that mirrors the fixed route service.

Senator Marilynn Rasmussen noted that the lack of transit funding directed to providing special needs transportation service is especially poignant. People with disabilities are place-bound and often rely on public transportation. The public needs to be educated about this issue.

Senator Georgia Gardner remarked that areas with the most need and least service are those that suffer service cuts when funding is curtailed.

Transit systems preserve the most used routes in order to provide service to the most people. This often leaves outlying areas underserved.

Transit systems are a partner in coordinated transportation. They are not the entire solution. Social service programs, medical facilities, school districts and others who offer services that people must be transported to, are also responsible for their clients transportation. This is not an extra part of their programs. It is an essential part. Without transportation, people cannot access services.

Gretchen White noted that when ACCT was conceived, it was looking at closing a small gap. We are still trying to close the gap, but the gap has grown much larger.

ACCT is currently offering two kinds of grants.

- Community coordination grants bring communities together to design a coordinated special needs transportation system for their community. Needs in rural counties are different than needs in urban counties. Community designed systems meet the specific needs of their area.

Acct is currently funding 13 counties through 11 grants. Our goal is for all counties to implement coordinated systems. More counties will be added as funds become available. ACCT will provide funding to coordinating counties until they implement their systems.

- Demonstration grants allow ACCT to address specific issues involved with coordinated transportation. The current demonstration project grants are

focused on community/school district coordination. New service is offered through these grants.

Acct demonstration project grants approved — *presented by Jeanne Ward*

The ACCT budget, which the council approved on June 2, 2000, included \$70,000 to fund demonstration projects. The PACT Forum decided to focus the grants on school/community partnerships since there is a widespread perception that schools are difficult to engage in coordinated transportation planning. It is possible to have a school/community partnership. The ACCT demonstration projects will be aimed at showing how this can be accomplished.

ACCT received four applications for demonstration project funds. The time frame for these applications was short. Staff feels that there will be continued interest in these funds if they are offered again.

A subcommittee of the PACT Forum reviewed the applications. They recommended the following:

Mason County. Fully fund this proposal.

Thurston County. Fund \$55,000 of the requested \$70,000. This proposal included addressing some items that have already been resolved. ACCT staff will work with the Thurston County group to identify these areas.

Pierce County. Fund one element of this proposal. Pierce County included three elements in its proposal. Only one of these was directly related to schools. The subcommittee recommended funding for that project only.

The recommended projects total cost will be more than \$70,000. Staff has identified some federal funds as a possible source for funding the additional cost. Some vehicles were purchased with assistance from a 5311 grant. When the vehicles were sold, the federal portion was returned to WSDOT. This money must be spent according to the original guidelines for the grant. Cathy Silins thinks that this money could be used to fund some parts of the demonstration projects.



Doreen Marchione moved that the council accept the priority of the PACT Forum subcommittee regarding the demonstration projects. \$70,000 of the ACCT budget will be used to fund the projects. The balance of the approved projects will be

funded with federal funds, if possible. Senator Marilyn Rasmussen seconded the motion. It passed unanimously.

Special Transportation Needs Study update — *presented by Faith Trimble*

Jeanne Ward gave a brief history of this study. After I695, advocates for special needs groups organized themselves to publicize the need for transportation in the special needs community. They found many funding streams, many providers, and many regulating groups. When trying to present their message to the Legislature they were frustrated with the lack of a central place to present it. This resulted in a proviso in the budget to study the need for a central point for special needs transportation issues.

The proviso was removed as the budget neared finalization. An implicit agreement that the study would be done remained.

Information about this study will be available on the ACCT web site (<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/pubtran/ACCT/>).

Steering committee

People from many advocacy groups were asked to nominate a representative to serve the steering committee that will oversee this study. There has been widespread interest in being represented on the committee.

The first meeting was held July 31. At this meeting members clarified the elements of a successful study; determined their roles and responsibilities.

A report is due to the Legislature in December of 2000.

State Agency Guidelines — *presented by Jim Erlandson, Nancy Hanna, and Gordon Kirkemo*

The State Agency Guidelines will help state agencies coordinate transportation services. ACCT approved the direction of the guidelines at the June 2 meeting. A subcommittee of the PACT Forum is developing the guidelines.

Legislative intent

The Legislature directed public transportation, pupil transportation, private non-profit, and other public agencies that sponsor transportation services, coordinate those services. The Legislature directed agencies that sponsor programs that

people have to travel to receive, to share the responsibility for transportation services to them.

The guidelines highlight the idea that all agencies that provide services to people with special transportation needs are partners in transporting them. The guidelines are addressed to state agencies, their subdivisions, and contractors.

ACCT expectations

The sample policies were included in the guidelines to illustrate each section. ACCT does not intend to tell agencies what their policies should be. They intend to direct agencies to the issues that need to be dealt with when writing their agency's policy.

The December report to the Legislature will include information about agencies who will be using the guidelines and those who feel they are not affected by the guidelines.

Future reporting requirements

The PACT Forum expects a brief report biennially from agencies that participate in developing policies, procedures and systems, that encourage coordinated transportation.

Information systems changes

Information management, budget, and finance are areas that need to be addressed. These are complex systems that may require significant amounts of time and money to change. ACCT and the PACT Forum are not yet ready to address this issue. The statute requires ACCT to lobby OFM for accountancy and information systems changes that will help track transportation expenses. This intricate process is best implemented over time.

How can ACCT raise the importance of this request?

Nancy Hanna explained that the subcommittee would like suggestions from the council on how to get people to attend to ACCT's request for information. If Governor Locke's office is involved, informed, and in favor, other agencies might be encouraged to become involved.

Senator Gardner suggested that Gretchen, another council member, and a legislative member schedule 5 minutes with the Governor to let him know what information ACCT is gathering and why. They will see if this issue can be an informational item at a Governor's staff meeting.

Senator Georgia Gardner remarked that the draft guidelines do a good job of explaining what information is needed and providing examples. Senator Gardner suggests using examples for describing coordinated transportation since some agencies will not have any experience with this idea.

The council complimented the subgroup on keeping the guidelines simple and only requesting usable information.

Requested changes:

Cover Letter

- Subject line should read: “New Statutory Requirements”
- Move the deadline to the beginning of the letter
- Explain what coordination means near the beginning of the letter
- Change “Questions” to “Where can I get technical assistance?” and reword the following paragraph to indicate that technical assistance is available.
- Add council members names on side of letterhead
- Gretchen White will sign the letter “Gretchen White for the ACCT Council”

Guidelines

- Stress that the examples are not meant to be adopted verbatim. They are a reminder of the issues to be addressed. They must be changed to fit individual agencies.



Senator Georgia Gardner moved that staff:

- Change the state guidelines and cover letter as outlined above
- E-mail them to council members for review
- Give 5 business days for comment and approval

The motion passed unanimously.

Keeping the Legislature informed of ACCT’s progress

Senator Marilyn Rasmussen suggested that ACCT update the legislature periodically in an informal way. She explained that legislators pass all types of policies. They like to know what changes those policies have made. Senator Rasmussen indicated that electronic documents are appreciated by legislators.

ACCT Staff will send a one-page informational brief to each legislator. This brief will include ACCT's mission, what we are doing to accomplish it and where coordination activities are located around the state. The ACCT web site address will be included.

Blue Ribbon Commission — *presented by Cathy Silins*

Individuals have been calling Cathy Silins to express their concern about the Blue Ribbon Commission's preliminary report. The preliminary report of the Blue Ribbon Commission focuses primarily on congestion relief. While this is an important issue, access and mobility are also important.

The Blue Ribbon Commission's report is available at <http://www.brct.wa.gov/>. You can get more information about the report or forward comments to the Blue Ribbon Commission from this web site. They will accept comments through September. Cathy Silins asked that council and audience members let people in their agencies know where to find this information. The times and places for public hearings are also listed on this web site.

ACCT staff is hopeful that the final recommendation will be flexible enough to cover all transportation needs in the state.

Guidelines from the Federal Coordination Council on Access and Mobility — *presented by Gordon Kirkemo*

Gordon Kirkemo explained that 15 years ago the federal Departments of Health and Human Services, and Transportation signed an agreement that formed the Coordinating Council. Over the last several years ACCT and Public Transportation Office staff have waited for the coordination guidelines. Planning Guidelines were released on August 1. These are described as being part of a "Transportation Tool Kit." It is not clear what else will be included in this "Took Kit". The Planning guidelines were disappointing.

The guidelines pass responsibility for coordinating transportation to state and local agencies. The Coordinating Council says they support coordinated transportation. They do not offer any changes in federal funding streams or categorical programs. They do not offer financial or other incentives to coordinate transportation.



The Coordinating Council is asking for feedback by September 1. The ACCT Council asked staff to:

- Draft comments
- Forward them to council members by e-mail
- Give one week for council members to review them
- Finalize comments
- E-mail comments to council for approval
- Forward comments to the Coordinating Council

ACCT orientation meeting — *presented by Cathy Silins and Jeanne Ward*

The ACCT Council will have an orientation meeting from 8:30 to 2:00 on September 1, 2000. The meeting will be held in the SeaTac area at a site accessible via shuttle bus from the airport.

This will be an informal meeting. Lunch will be provided for council members.

Items that will be discussed include:

- Brief background information
- Assessment of where we are and how we can improve
- Communication
- Council structure

Permanent change in ACCT agenda

Senator Marilyn Rasmussen suggested that time be reserved for public comment on each ACCT agenda. The council approved this change. This will allow audience members time to bring up subjects that were not addressed during the meeting.

Gretchen White reminded audience members that they are welcome to join the council's discussions at any point during the meeting. The ACCT council relies on audience member's knowledge of coordination issues.

Public comment

Dave O'Connell thanked the council on behalf of Mason County, for supporting their proposed school/community demonstration project.

Senator Marilyn Rasmussen requested that information on the ACCT demonstration projects be posted on the ACCT web page.

George Tyler, disabled veteran, suggested consistent eligibility criteria for all programs. This would reduce the confusion around who is eligible for what services.

Dan Snow, WSTA, reminded the group of the importance of responding to the federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility's Guidelines. For the last 20 years discussions of coordinating transportation stop at the federal level. There are federal requirements tied to funding. These requirements will not allow one program's vehicle to transport a member of another program. Dan suggests that ACCT be specific about the stumbling blocks that federal regulations impose on local coordination efforts.

Dick Lauch, Rainbow Vans, would like to see programs such as his established in other parts of the state. Rainbow provides safe, secure transportation for people who are mentally ill. The transportation is not overly restrictive. A variety of transportation sources are used, including fixed route transit (with an attendant, if necessary). Transportation varies according to the needs of each passenger.

Mr. Lauch is willing to discuss this program with anyone interested in using it in other areas of the state.

Cathy Silins let the group know of her upcoming meeting concerned with emergency response. OSPI, WSTA, CTA-NW, and others will be represented at this meeting. Much of a county's emergency response plan is organized at the county level. The Governor is also responsible for statewide emergency response. This plan includes things like forest fires, facility evacuation (state homes, nursing homes). The group is working on a memo of understanding between state agencies. ACCT's lessons about coordination at the local level will be helpful to this group.

Meeting adjourned



Summary of council decisions:

1. Council accepted the priority of the PACT Forum subcommittee regarding the demonstration projects. \$70,000 of the ACCT budget will be used to fund these projects.
2. Staff will make changes to the State Agency Guidelines and cover letter and seek electronic approval from the council.

3. Draft comments on the Federal Coordinating Council on Access and Mobility's guidelines and seek electronic approval from the council.

Next regular council meeting

Friday, October 6, 2000
9:30–12:30

DOT Commission Board Room (1D22)
310 Maple Park Avenue, SE
Olympia, Washington 98504-7387

For questions regarding grant administration, policy and council activities, contact Jeanne Ward, ACCT Administrator, at 360-705-7917 or wardje@wsdot.wa.gov. For information on meetings, agendas, materials, and clerical issues, contact Debra Mendoza, ACCT Secretary, at 360-705-7911 or Mendozd@wsdot.wa.gov.